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They climb high trees, And sit quietly
on their boughs, in order to plunder the hives
concealed there, without any sense of danger
or giddiness. After their removal to our colo-
nies, being fatigued with handling the axe and
the plough, instruments to which they were
unaccustomed, and feeling their strength fail
them, their bodies bathed in sweat, and burn-
ing with heat, they exclaimed, *La yivichigui
yauigra*, now my blood is angry. For this they
have a ready remedy: they plunge a knife deep
into their leg, watch the blood spouting from
it for some time with pleased eyes, and at
length stop it by applying a clod to the wound,
saying with a cheerful voice that they are re-
covered, and feel perfectly well. They are
as lavish, and almost prodigal in shedding
their blood, for the purpose of obtaining glory,
as of procuring health; for in public drink-
ing parties they cruelly prick their breast,
arms and tongue with a bundle of thorns, or
with the sharp bones of a crocodile's back, with
much effusion of blood. They emulate one
another in doing this, in order to obtain a re-
putation for bravery, and that these sponta-
neous wounds may render them less fearful of
shedding their blood in engagements with the
enemy, and may make their skin impenetrable
by covering it with scars. Boys of seven years
old pierce their little arms in imitation of their

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one of them kills a tiger, he cuts it into small portions, and divides it amongst himself and his companions, that all the hordesmen may share in what they think so delightful a delicacy. It is an old complaint amongst physicians that new seasonings of food imported from the new world have brought with them new diseases into Europe. This complaint cannot affect the Abipones, who are unacquainted with seasonings, and feed upon simple fare. They detest vinegar; and salt, though as fond of it as goats, they are seldom able to obtain, their land producing neither salt nor salt-pits. To remedy this deficiency they burn a shrub called by the Spaniards *vidriera*, and sprinkle its ashes, which have a saltish taste, on meat and on tobacco leaves, previously chewed and kneaded together with the saliva of old women. But as many of the Abiponian hordes are destitute of this shrub, the ashes of which are used for salt, they generally eat their meat unsalted. No one ever denied that the moderate use of salt is wholesome, for it sucks up noxious humours, and prevents putrefaction: but the too frequent use of it deadens the eye-sight, exhausts the better juices, and creates acrid ones injurious both to the blood and skin, by which means physicians say that the urinal passages are frequently hurt. We found in Paraguay that horses, mules, oxen,

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000 self and for his people, and shortly after conquered and slain by Cortez.

787 Let us now return to the superstitions of the
821 Abipones, who think another star, the name of which I have forgotten, portentous, formidable, and destructive. They say that those years in which this star has been seen have always proved bloody and disastrous to their nation. When a whirlwind drives the dust round in a circle, the women throw ashes in its way, that it may be satisfied with that food, and may turn in some other direction. But if the wind rushes
[763] into any house with that impetuous whirling, they are certain that one of the inhabitants will die soon. If any live bees be found in the
825 honey-comb, which they bring from the woods,
• 222 they say that they must be killed out of doors, imagining, that if this be done within the house, they shall never be able to find any more honey.

756 The Abipones labour under many superstitions, because they abound in jugglers, the teachers of superstition. The most famous at the time that I lived there, were Hanetrâin, Nahagalkin, Oaikin, Kaëperlahachin, Pazanoirin, Kaachi, Kepakairkin, Laamamin, and Pariekaikin, the first, and by far the most eminent of them all, who had obtained a high reputation for his prophecies and other peculiarities of his office. Female jugglers abound to such a de-

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CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE FOOD, JOURNEYS, AND OTHER PARTICULARS OF THE ECONOMY OF THE ABIPONES.

222 THE wild Abipones live like wild beasts. They 224 neither sow, nor reap, nor take any heed of [241] agriculture. Taught by natural instinct, the [82] instructions of their ancestors, and their own experience, they are acquainted with all the productions of the earth and the trees, at what part of the year they spontaneously grow, what animals are to be found in what places, and what arts are to be employed in taking them. 421 All things are in common with them. They have no proprietors, as with us, of lands, rivers, and groves, who possess the exclusive right of hunting, fishing, and gathering wood there. Whatever flies in the air, swims in the water, and grows wild in the woods, may become the property of the first person that chooses to take it. The Abipones are unacquainted with spades, ploughs, and axes; the arrow, the spear, the club, and horses, are the only instruments they make use of in procuring food, clothing, and 221 habitation. As all lands do not bear all things, and as various productions grow at various

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times of the year, they cannot continue long in one situation. They remove from place to place, wherever they can most readily satisfy the demands of hunger and thirst. The plains abound in emus, and their numerous eggs, in deer, tigers, lions, various kinds of rabbits, and other small animals peculiar to America, and also in flocks of partridges. Numbers of stags, exactly like those of our country, frequent the banks of the larger rivers. Innumerable herds of wild boars are almost constantly to be seen in marshy places, which they delight in, in the neighbourhood of a wood. The groves, besides antas, and tamanduas, contain swarms of monkeys and parrots. The lakes and rivers, which abound in fish, produce water-wolves, water-dogs, capibaris, innumerable otters, and flocks of geese and ducks. I do not mention the great multitude of tortoises, as neither the Abipones nor Spaniards eat them in Paraguay. At stated times of the year, they collect quantities of young cormorants, on the banks of rivers, and reckon them amongst the delicacies of the table. Were none of these things to be procured, tree fruits and hives of excellent honey would never be wanting. The various species of palms alone will supply meat, drink, medicine, habitation, clothes, arms, and what not,

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to those that are in need. Under the earth, and even under the water, grow esculent roots. Two species of the alfaroba, commonly called St. John's bread, throughout great part of the year, produce extremely wholesome, and by no means unsavoury food, both meat and drink. See the munificence of God even towards those by whom he is not worshipped! Behold a rude image of the golden age! The Abipones have it in their power to procure all the appurtenances of daily life, with little or no labour, and though unacquainted with money of every kind, are commodiously supplied with all necessaries; for if a long drought have exhausted the rivers, they will find water even in the most desert plains, under the leaves of the caraquatà, or they can suck little apples, which are full of a watery liquor like melons, and grow under the earth, or dig a well in the channel of a dried-up river, and see water sufficient for themselves and their horses spring up from thence. A Spaniard, in the wilds of America, will pine with thirst, either from being ignorant of these things, or impatient of the labour of obtaining them.

As the supports of life are not all found collected together in one place, nor will suffice for a long time, or a great number of hordesmen, the Abipones are obliged to change their residence,

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Some time after my arrival, I played on the flute in the open street. The crowd of women were delighted with the sweetness of a musical instrument they had never before seen; and the youths flocked in numbers to hear it: but as soon as they approached, the women every one disappeared. The custom of bathing in a neighbouring stream is agreeable to them, and practised every day, except when the air is too cold. But do not imagine that, as syrens and dolphins are seen sporting on the same waves in the ocean, males and females swim and wash in the same part of the lake, or river. According to the Abiponian custom, the different sexes have different places assigned them. Where the women bathe, you cannot find the shadow of a man. Above a hundred women often go out to distant plains together to collect various fruits, roots, colours, and other useful things, and remain four or eight days in the country, without having any male to accompany them on their journey, assist them in their labours, take care of the horses, or guard them amidst the perils of wild beasts, or of enemies. Those Amazons are sufficient to themselves, and think they are safer alone. I never heard of a single woman being torn to pieces by a tiger, or bitten by a serpent: but I knew many men who were killed in both ways.

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that the sulphureous smoke may not be permitted to escape. You then light all the sulphur you have at hand, by means of bellows, and the smoke filling the whole cave will suffocate all the ants that lurk there. This has been successfully practised by many persons in Paraguay. But if sulphur be wanting in these solitudes, or patience to use it, then grapes and the productions of the trees and plains must fail also. The ants will devastate every thing, and elude all the arts of the cultivator, unless destroyed by the smoke of sulphur. 136*

It were to wrong the Paraguayrian ants, if, after having so minutely described all the mischief they commit, I were to be silent on their benefits. Some of the larger sort have a little ball in the hind part of their bodies full of very white fat, which, when collected, and melted like butter, is eaten with pleasure both by Indians and Spaniards. Other very small ants, in those shrubs which bear the quabyra-mifi, deposit a wax naturally white, and consisting of small particles, which is used to make candles for the use of the altar, and when lighted exhales an odour sweeter than frankincense, but quickly melts, and though double the price of any other wax is sooner consumed. There are also ants that convey to their caves particles of fragrant rosin, which serve for frankincense. In [262 222]

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*136 than a man's middle finger. When an infinite swarm of them approaches, a terrible darkness breaks from the farthest horizon, and you would swear that a black cloud pregnant with rain, wind, and lightning was drawing nigh. My Abipones, on such occasions, often snatched up arms, and placed themselves in battle array; for the locusts, beheld from a distance, looked like a cloud of dust stirred up by a troop of hostile savages. Wherever the locusts settle, they deprive the fields of their productions, the trees of their leaves, the plain of grass, and men and cattle of food; while the numerous offspring which they leave behind continue the devastation to another year, and create further misery. The army of locusts is prevented from flying to the ground, and feeding in the fields sowed with various kinds of grain, by the sound of drums, the shouting of voices, the firing of guns, and continual rustling of boughs in the air; if these methods fail of driving them away, all the men in the Guarany towns are employed in collecting and killing them. In one day we have often with pleasure beheld many bushels full of these insects, and have condemned them either to the fire or the water. The Abipones had rather eat locusts than drown or burn them; on which account, as they are flying, they knock them down to the ground with long sticks, roast

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them at the fire on the same, or on spits, and devour them with as much avidity as we do partridges or beccaficos, rejecting however the males. It has been my intention to treat here of all the noxious insects that occasion death, disease, or damage: but what a field should I have, were I also to describe the harmless ones both of the land and water. Good Heavens! what an abundance is there of flies, worms, bees, hornets, drones, and grasshoppers! What an immense diversity of glow-worms, shining here and there by night like stars! Some, which are about the size of a grass-worm, by moving their wings, others from their eyes alone, emit a light strong enough for one to read by. Some glow only behind, others in every part of their bodies. Wood, reeds, leaves, and roots of plants, when putrefied, scatter at night, particularly in moist places, a green, red, yellow, or blue radiance, resembling diamonds, emeralds, chrysolites, rubies, &c. This was a nightly spectacle to us in the woods between the rivers Acaray and Monday. I carried some rubbish which I had observed to glitter in this manner, to my town, where it shone as long as it continued moist; when wetted, it regained its former splendour, which, however, ceased at last, in spite of fresh supplies of water. I never perceived phosphoric lights of this nature in

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an hour, that it is time to desist, by repeated precussion of their lips, and by pronouncing the little words *Kla leyd*, it is enough. With this admonition, they immediately comply, and conclude the magnificent commemoration of their mighty deeds with *Gramackka akanl*: Such then we are. Another pair then succeeds to the former, and in this manner the singing is protracted till the morning. Then, indeed, the scene is changed, the drinking commences, and their dry and weary throats are refreshed with that American nectar made either of honey, or the alfaroba. The women, and the unmarried men are excluded from these drinking-parties, though the latter are allowed to drink mead in private, as the women to drink pure honey, and eat the raw alfaroba.

To seek honey in the woods for making this drink, is the business of the men, but the whole labour of preparing it falls upon the women, who have to knock down the alfarobas from the trees, to carry them home on horseback, to pound them in mortars, to pour water on them, and to dress the hides which serve to hold the liquor. The method of their construction is this: the feet are cut off, the hide is made square; its four sides are then raised to the height of two spans, so that it receives at the bottom any liquor that you may pour in, and holds it without spilling a drop.